

O 201005Z JAN 09
FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4050

UNCLAS STOCKHOLM 000038

SECSTATE FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/PPD, EUR/NB, EUR/PA, EUR/FO

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [PINS](#) [PHUM](#) [PREF](#) [EUN](#) [SW](#)

SUBJECT: Media Reaction - Swedish troops in Afghanistan

On January 20 the apolitical Stockholm business daily "Dagens Industri" editorialized "Swedish Military Must Stay in Afghanistan" stating that:

"Yesterday, Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt arrived at Camp Northern Lights in Mazar-i-Sharif in northern Afghanistan....

"The military effort in Afghanistan is questioned. Recently, former Swedish Defense Minister, Social Democrat Thage G. Peterson, asked why Sweden is in Afghanistan and viewed the effort as a consequence of a policy characterized by 'soft slippers' and 'adaptability' in relation to the EU and NATO....

"He is not alone. Special debate has emerged around the fact that in reality it is NATO leading the military activities in Afghanistan....

"When Fredrik Reinfeldt now visits the troops in Mazar-i-Sharif, it has a morale value for the Swedes there. It also, hopefully, contributes to the Swedish defense discussion being separated into what is important and what is not....

"Afghanistan is an example of what the Swedish defense force should be used for - at least it should be natural for all who believe that democratic countries have a duty to assist in the crisis hotbeds around the world where an effort could be beneficial....

"The government will discuss the security situation in depth, but also count on the bill to include strong measures for considerably streamlining Swedish defense....

"It is a priority, and not only to prevent tax resources from being wasted. A more efficient and flexible defense is necessary....

"There is also the need for sufficient protection of the Swedes who work for peace and freedom in other countries."

SILVERMAN